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SEEING EDMONTON'S RAILWAYS

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When the words "trainwatching" or "railfanning" are used, most of us immediately think of the more famous viewpoints -- Sherman Hill, Englewood, Cajon Pass. We thus usually dismiss these activities to our summer holidays, if, indeed, we worry about them at all. However, while these are truly highlights there is much of interest to see wherever there is a train.

Nowhere is this more true than in Edmonton, which contains a considerable amount of fascinating things to see. So, on some sunny morn, if you can find one, take your camera and a notebook and have a look around. But... first a warning !! The times shown below are all taken from the current 1964 CNR and CPR timetables, and these may well change in the fall.

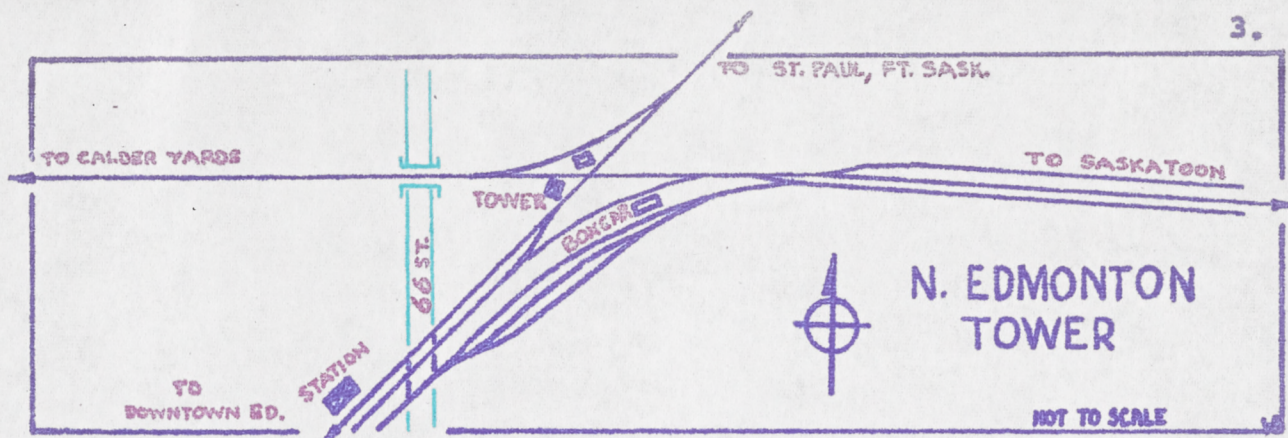
Luckily, you do not have to get up too early in the morn to start this tour, since the first passenger train does not leave until 0850. This is CPR 304 to Calgary, which is usually composed of Budd RDC cars. A good spot to watch this train is

at the south end of High Level Bridge - park your car beside Garneau Drug on the old ETS streetcar grade. Stand on the bridge over the railway and watch the cars rumble slowly (20 mph., theoretically) over the river bridge and then around the curve and under your feet. As soon as it is by, if you wish to see the same train at speed, head south on 109th. Street to 61st. Avenue and so to Highway 2, and drive down to Ellerslie, or whatever place you can reach ahead of the train. A rural grade crossing is quite an impressive point at which to see the cars roar by at 65-80 mph.

Return to the city along the Calgary Trail and, at Whyte Avenue, turn right three blocks across the CPR tracks to 101st. Street to see the CPR yards... not forgetting the attractive station. The yards are now but a shadow of their former self, engine-wise, though you may catch a Fairbanks Morse unit or two, visiting. Nevertheless, the passenger and service cars on view make a visit worthwhile.

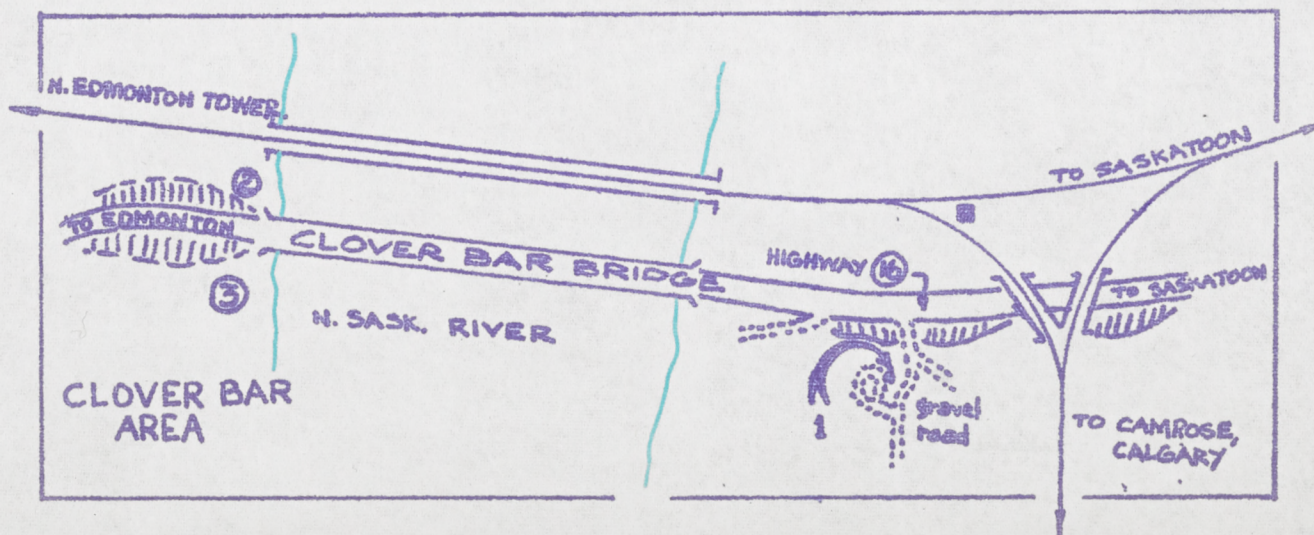
Having had your fill, head into the centre of Edmonton to the CNR downtown station and check on the punctuality of the Super Continentals east and west ... this may save you time later on. Head west along 104th. Avenue between the CNR and CPR yards, perhaps deviating to 103rd. Avenue between 104th. and 105th. Sts. to see one of Edmontons two STUB three way switches (the other is in the lane behind Ashdowns warehouse between 105th. and 106th. Streets, just a block further west.) Hasten onwards, at least on WEDNESDAYS and SATURDAYS to arrive at the Northern Alberta Ry's. operating base, Dunvegan Yards by 1000. This yard lies alongside the St. Albert Trail, just north of the CNR main line west, at about 131st. Avenue. If you have timed your arrival correctly, you will see a headlight shining along the mainline to the north west. This will be Train 2 from Dawson Creek, headed by an NAR 200 series road switcher, and trailing an interesting collection of head end cars and one modern CNR coach. There is plenty to see here - introduce yourself to the friendly engine foreman in the new diesel shop and he will almost certainly let you look around and take pictures. Don't miss the two beautiful business cars "Dunvegan" and "peace River" and the crowded storage tracks beyond them.

All too soon it's time to hurry away across the city to the northeast. Cross back over the CNR main line, turn left at the roundabout to 125th. Avenue; at 127th. Street, turn left under the railway and bear right on to 127th. Avenue past the CNR's large Calder diesel shops. At 97th. Street, cross under the railway once again and turn left at the traffic lights on to 125th. Avenue. Follow this road through to the Fort Trail, at which point turn left and drive between packing plants, and under the railway once more, to 66th. Street. Here, turn right for a block to reach North Edmonton station, and a very interesting track layout.....



Briefly, the mainline from Eastern Canada crosses Clover Bar Bridge some two miles east of this junction and runs due west to North Edmonton. Here it divides... one line, freight only, goes on westward into Calder yards (it is this line that you have been playing Tag with on your cross- city drive); while the other turns southwest to serve the passenger station and downtown industries and freight yards. The old subsidiary main line via North Battleford also enters Edmonton here from the northeast, crossing the Calder line at grade right beside the tower. This is Edmontons busiest railway scene and was, until recently, controlled from the tower-- however CTC has taken over and the tower is now dead.

Park your car at the station - the FOURTH one we have seen already- or near the old boxcar office opposite the interlocking tower and choose your viewpoint carefully to keep clear of tracks since switchers are continually moving about here. In 80 mins. you will, with luck, see four passenger trains- the first three all being made up normally of Budd RDC's. First to arrive, at 1114 is No. 635 from Grand Centre and St. Paul. This is usually a single car, though at busy times it will expand to a Geep, several headend cars and a coach or two. Twenty minutes later, at 1134, No. 607 will arrive from North Battleford via Fort Saskatchewan. Both of these trains will appear from the northeast and clatter across the diamond, to stop, perhaps, at North Edmonton before running downtown. Their headlights will be visible for about five minutes as the track is straight for over 3 1/2 miles from beyond St. Paul Jct., where they both stop to register. That, incidentally, is another good place for an unusual picture.



You can, if you wish, stay at North Edmonton to see the other two trains arrive from the east and swing around the curve to run downtown.. however a better viewpoint for these is at Clover Bar Bridge. If you decide to move, do not wait beyond 1135 for Train 607. If its headlight has not appeared by then, and you wait for its arrival, there is insufficient time for you to change viewpoints. So, if you move, drive south on 66th, Street to 118 Avenue (Highway 16) and then east through Beverly to the bridge over the North Saskatchewan. Here, there are an interesting variety of positions from which to watch. For your first visit, the best place is shown as point 1 on the sketch on page 3. Half-way between the end of the river bridge and the CNR overpass, a gravel (sic) track runs off to the right and winds uphill, through a wasteland of old car bodies to the edge of a ridge, from which point you can see in all directions. Look to the south and you will, almost at once, see Train 613-625 heading in from Camrose. This is an RDC train - at least I have never seen it otherwise - and is actually TWO trains. 613 starts from Calgary and 625 from Drumheller. They join at Camrose and run into Edmonton as one. Several good pictures are possible as the train runs slowly around the curve on to the mainline and across the bridge at about 1150. Finally, some twenty minutes later again, the CNR's crack train - the Super Continental, No.1 - will come in from the east. Observe the mixture of units on the front end and the tasteful rearend-- usually a battered baggage car in true CNR style !! It is at this point that the advantage of checking the trains timekeeping becomes obvious--- there is nothing more agonising than sitting on this hilltop and waiting.... and waiting... and waiting.....!

Incidentally, do NOT NOT NOT drive up to this viewpoint if it is wet !! I wouldnt advise walking in either, your feet will each weigh 50lb. after ten paces ! The other two places on the west bank are also good spots. You can easily get up to track-side (point 2) or, by scrambling up a steep slope, get a very pretty view through small trees from point 3.

Now you can go and have some lunch ! However, at 1325, you should aim to be under the High Level Bridge in the Royal Glenora carpark just north of the River Valley Road. At 1330 CPR No. 302 will rumble high overhead enroute to Calgary, and this gives an interesting contrast with your morning viewing of a similar train.

As soon as this train is out of sight, drive north on 105th. Street and park under the 105th. Street overpass. Walk out on the bridge to view the CNR downtown yards. You should see the headlight of CNR 2, the eastbound Super Continental, approaching as it is due at 1345. Good overhead pictures may be taken from the middle of the bridge - in particular of the full length dome car, which will be cut out of the train as you watch. You might as well stay on the bridge to watch the switching - usually two engines are at work - or you can drive up to the old GTP terminal

buildings at 98th. Street to see the engines being refuelled from a B.A. tanktruck. Sometime this winter the domes are going to be modified and fitted with reversible seats - until this is done the cars have to be turned at Edmonton, and this is done shortly after arrival on the unusual baloon loop near Calder. The short train of switcher and dome makes an odd sight as it heads west and then north parallel to 122nd. Street to about 124th. Avenue, where it runs around the loop and then heads back to the 104th. Avenue coach yards for maintenance.

In a way, that ends the formal programme, for a while anyway. There is still lots to see, though, and here are some ideas :-

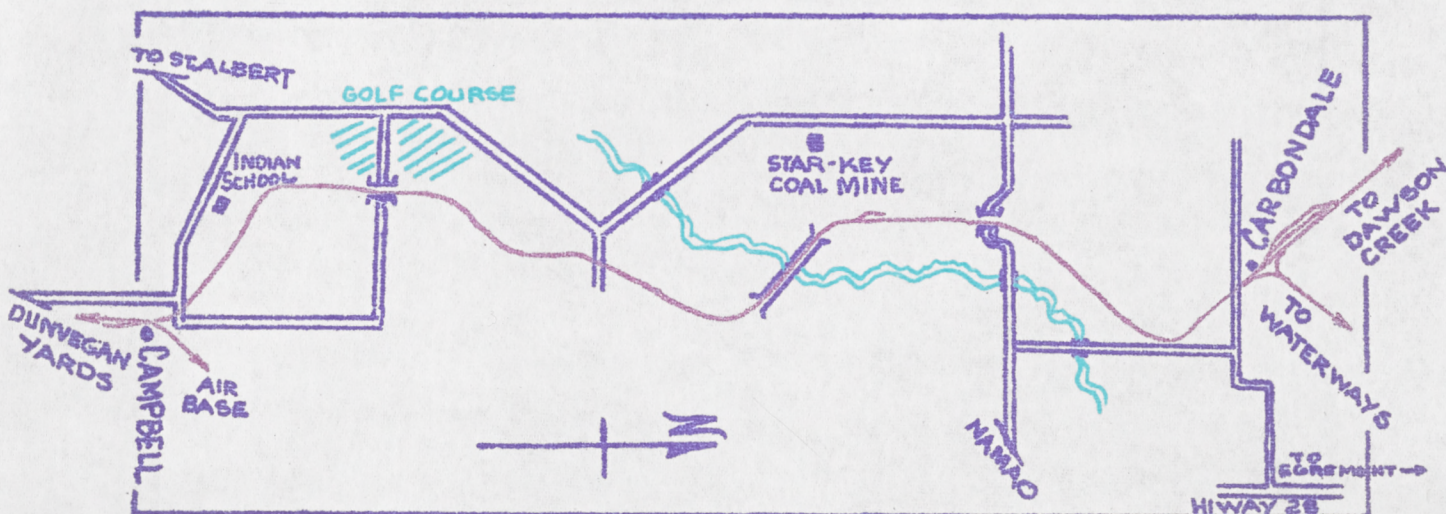
- a) CPR station at Jasper Avenue and 109th. Street. You should visit this, if only so that you can say you have been to all five of Edmontons stations.
- b) CNR 4-6-0 No. 1392 at the Exhibition Grounds.
- c) ETS streetcar No. 1 at Cromdale Car barns (but get permission first before wandering around.)
- d) NAR 2-8-0 No. 73 at the CRHA museum, wherever that will be. This is a visit you can make in 1965 - at present 73 is inaccessible.
- e) CNR Calder yards which stretch across the city between 125th. and 127th. Avenues. Lots to see here and all quite easily reached from public roads.

However, if it happens to be a WEDNESDAY or a SATURDAY, and particularly if it is sunny, there is one more "must". This is Northern Albertas train 8 inbound from Waterways. For the enthusiast, this is perhaps the most interesting train of the day. It will be headed by one or two 1200 hp. six wheel truck 300 series engines and will contain one or more reefers, a conglomeration of NAR head end cars -- wooden, steel, ex-troop sleepers, etc.--one comboose (3057) and a coach (1950). More or less all in NAR colours too, and a very pretty sight. It is worth making quite an effort to catch this train at several places, so here is its schedule :-

EGREMONT	dep 1602
FEDORAH	1634
BON ACCORD	1652
CARBONDALE	1711
CAMPBELL	1729
DUNVEGAN YARDS	1834

Drive north on Highway 28 (97th. Street) past Namsco. Beyond the Sturgeon River valley you will cross the NAR at grade--note the light 65lb. rail-- and again just outside Bon Accord. Several miles further on, the line is visible to your left and again at Fedorah, straight ahead as the highway turns east. From Fedorah to Egremont, road and railway run parallel. If you have time-- it takes close to an hour-- drive to Egremont and pace the train back to Fedorah. Run ahead of it to Bon Accord,

where good pictures may be taken, either at the station or at the grade crossing or a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west of the crossing on a pretty earth fill. Race ahead once again to catch it at the highway 28 crossing, and then drive into town to Dunvegan yards for a last look. If you know the local roads well- and they are not too muddy or bumpy- you can intercept the train at Carbondale and at a wood bridge near the St. Albert golf course. Here is a rough map of the area, keeping in mind that Edmonton on the map is to left of the page.



Well, if you did everything described above- you're a Railfan. In fact you still haven't seen all our local points of interest. For example, this does not include Edmonton's only industrial switcher, the remnants of two abandoned railroads or much of a look at our many industrial spurs. There is also an interesting night scene- or scenes- when the two CN Panoramas halt briefly. The eastbound rests at the station between 2140 and 2200 while the westbound is somewhat later, from 0010 to 0030. A good view to these trains may be gotten east of the station anywhere in the first half mile.

GOOD HUNTING !!

BRANCH MEETINGS.

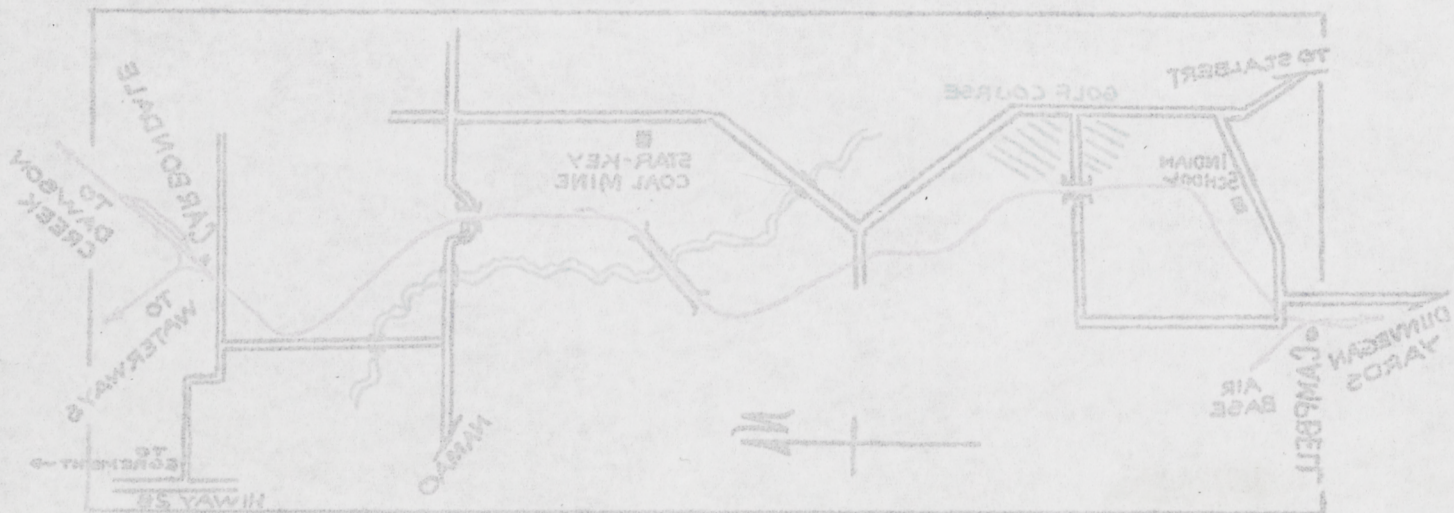
We have earlier publicised our October meeting, but, as a reminder, may we say again that it will be on Tuesday, 13th. Oct. at 8pm. at our old meeting room at Cromdale - and NOT in our No.1 -- the subject will be "The Railways of the Netherlands" by John Bakker. The NOVEMBER meeting will be on Tuesday, November 10th. and will be devoted to "Memories of 5114", which ran to Camrose just over three years ago. Please bring any movies slides or pictures that you have of this engine, and we will show them all !!

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